Post 11/29/68

Klansman Gets 30 Years In Miss. Bomb Attempt

MERIDIAN, Miss., Nov. 28 (UPI)—Defense attorneys plan to return to court Friday to ask a new trial for a young Ku Klux Klansman facing 30 years in prison for a June 30 bombing attempt at the home of a prominent Jewish businessman.

The sentence was levied by Circuit Court Judge Lester Williamson against Thomas Albert Tarrants III, 21, of Mobile, Ala., after his conviction under a state law that makes attempted bombing a felony punishable by death. The prosecution had asked that Tarrants be sent to the gas chamber.

Defense Attorney Roy Pitts said a hearing was scheduled Friday on the motion for a new trial. If denied, he said an appeal would be filed with the State Supreme Court.

Tarrants remained in the Lauderdale County Jail, where he has been held in lieu of $200,000 bond since his release from a hospital following the bombing attempt. He showed no emotion when the jury, composed of 11 white and a Negro, brought back the verdict after deliberating one hour and 50 minutes.

The bombing attempt at the home of Meyer Davidson was foiled by a police stake-out, touching off a gunbattle in which a Jackson school teacher was killed and three persons, including Tarrants, were wounded. A Meridian policeman and a bystander also were wounded.

The defense maintained that Tarrants was innocent by reason of insanity and urged the jury to send him to a mental institution.